

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM, NATO, FR, US
SUBJ: US-FRENCH DISCUSSIONS ON ARMS TRANSFER
RESTRAINT

1. PM DIRECTOR GELB, HIRSCHFELD (ACDA) AND CLAPP (PM)
MET WITH PAGNIEZ (DEPUTY POLITICAL DIRECTOR), D'AUMALE,
DEPUTY ECONOMIC DIRECTOR MFA; BEY-ROFFI, OFFICER
IN ECONOMIC DIRECTORATE; AND DE LA ROCHEFORDIERE,
COUNSELOR IN BUREAU OF PACTS AND DISARMAMENT FEBRUARY 21
TO PRESENT US VIEWS ON MULTILATERAL ARMS RESTRAINT
POLICY AND PROSPECTS. GELB DESCRIBED:

--US RESTRAINT POLICY (ALSO PRESENTED PAPER ON US
DECISION-MAKING PROCESS).

--RESULTS OF US-SOVIET ARMS TRANSFER BILATERALS
DECEMBER 14-17, 1977 (AND GAVE FRENCH "NON-PAPER"
PASSED TO SOVIETS).

--US GUIDELINES APPROACH; AND
--POSSIBILITIES FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH RECIPIENTS,
INCLUDING SSOD PROSPECTS.

2. PAGNIEZ POINTED OUT THAT FRANCE NEEDED TO MAINTAIN
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CONDITIONS WHERE FRENCH INDUSTRY CAN STAY ALIVE
AND HEALTHY, AND DEVELOP NORMALLY. FRANCE WAS NOT
DISPOSED TO MEET REGULARLY WITH OTHER ALLIES--ALTHOUGH
MEETING WAS NOT COMPLETELY EXCLUDED AT SOME APPROPRIATE
POINT. THIS POSITION WAS CONSISTENT WITH GISCARD'S
STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 9, AND REFLECTED FACT THAT NUCLEAR
SUPPLIERS CONFERENCE WHICH US SIDE CITED AS EXAMPLE

HAD STARTED AS SECRET, AND LATER BECAME PUBLIC. EFFECT WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE THIRD WORLD IMPRESSION OF SUPPLIER COLLUSION AGAINST THIRD WORLD INTERESTS. THIS IS REASON FRENCH PREFER CONCENTRATING ON REGIONAL APPROACH, FOR THE TIME BEING. FRENCH PROPOSE TO TAKE THIRD WORLD SOUNDINGS SOON.

3. APPARENTLY FOR THE RECORD, PAGNIEZ ADDED POINT THAT THERE COULD BE NO REAL DISCUSSIONS AMONG PRODUCERS WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OF USSR. HE ADDED THAT FRANCE HAD HAD NO DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS TO DATE ON THIS ISSUE, BUT DOES NOT EXCLUDE SUCH DISCUSSIONS IN THE FUTURE. HE APPRECIATED DESCRIPTION OF US-SOVIET BILATERALS. ON US CEILING, FRENCH ASKED FOR ELABORATION OF EXEMPTED STATES LIST, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO STATUS OF ISRAEL, WHICH GELB EXPLAINED.

4. TWO INTERESTING POINTS EMERGED DURING LUNCHTIME CONVERSATIONS:

--FRENCH DISARMAMENT INITIATIVE WAS CONDITIONED BY CALCULATION THAT A GENERALIZED ARMS RESTRAINT DEBATE IN SSOD COULD FOCUS ON ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA. IN ORDER TO AVOID DEBATING ISRAEL ISSUE DIRECTLY, FRENCH HAD INVENTED CONCEPT THAT SUPPLIER RESTRAINT SHOULD DEPEND ON REGIONAL INITIATIVES. FURTHERMORE, LIKE UK, FRENCH ARE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING "NEGATIVE SECURITY SECRET

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ASSURANCES" FOR NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES (NNWS). IDEA IS THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES WOULD PLEDGE NOT TO ATTACK NNWS UNLESS SUCH AN ATTACK WERE MADE IN COLLUSION WITH OR BY STATES ALLIED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES.

5. GELB PROPOSED TO SEND US STATFF LEVEL EXPERT GROUP IN NEXT MONTH OR TWO FOR MORE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS OF GUIDELINES, STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH ARMS TRANSFER IN SSOD, AND OTHER ISSUES OF COMMON INTEREST. FRENCH UNDERTOOK TO RESPOND LATER. THEY WERE NON-COMMITTAL ON GELB'S PROPOSAL THAT FRENCH PRODUCE PAPER COMPARABLE TO US PAPER ON ARMS TRANSFER DECISION PROCESS, OR ON SUGGESTION THAT FRENCH COMMENT ON BRITISH GUIDELINES PAPER.

HARTMAN

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